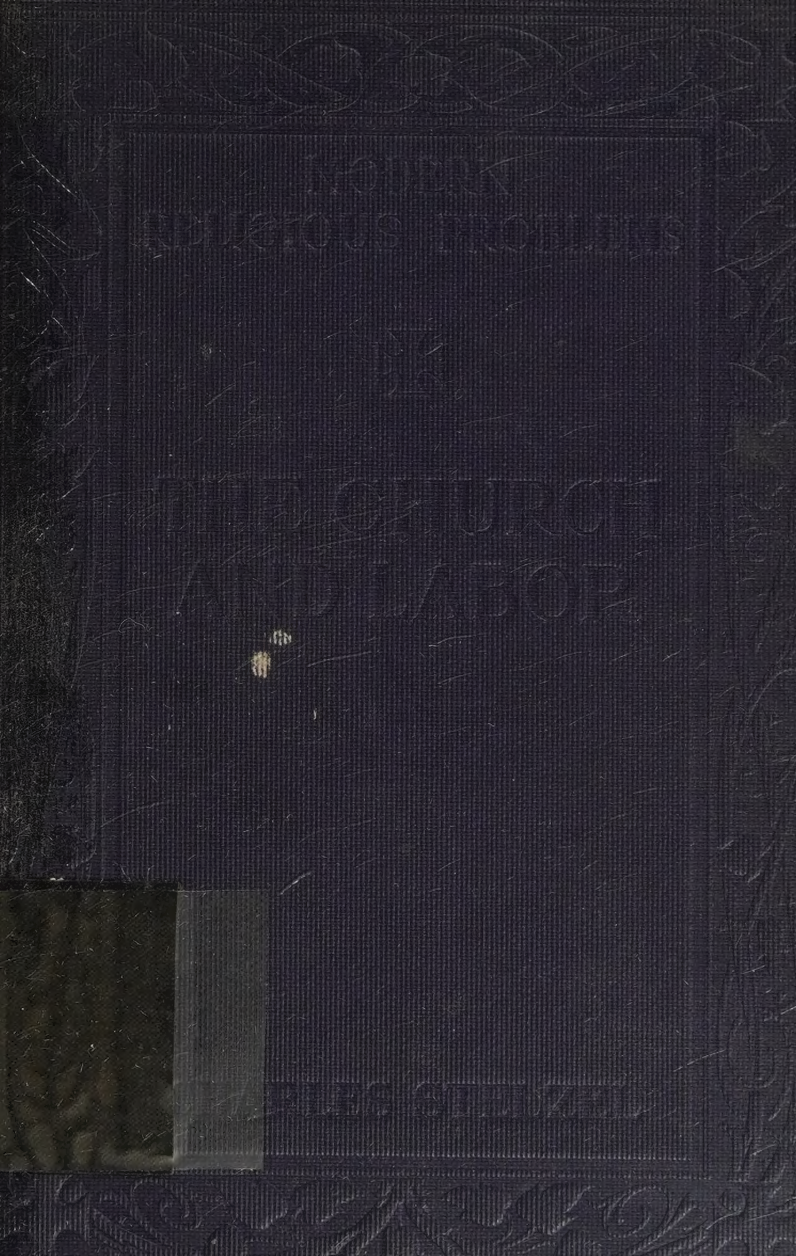

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Modern Religious Problems

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THE CHURCH AND LABOR

BY

CHARLES STELZLE

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PREFACE

When the writing of this book was first considered, it was a question as to whether the discussion should deal with methods of work or with the spirit of the Church and Labor. It was decided that the latter is of greater importance, hence this selection of the treatment of the subject. It is frankly acknowledged that better things might truthfully have been said about the Church and worse things about Labor, but there is already considerable literature telling about what the Church has done and what Labor has left undone, — especially when the question is discussed from the viewpoint of the Church. This book is written largely from the standpoint of Labor. An attempt is made to present the spirit which underlies the labor movement, and to show that

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the Church must understand this spirit if it is to measure up to its opportunity.

CHARLES STELZLE.

NEW YORK, January 1, 1910.

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THE CHURCH AND LABOR

I

THE ATTITUDE OF LABOR TOWARD THE CHURCH

RECENTLY, while studying conditions among European workingmen, I visited the People's Palace in Brussels. From basement to topmost story the building was crowded with artisans and their families, who had come to enjoy the evening in social intercourse, to receive instruction in one of the many classes, to listen to the lectures in the great auditorium, or to find diversion or to seek knowledge through association with smaller groups or clubs which were interested in the same amusements, the same studies, the same problems that brought them to the building. Never had I seen

better behavior, nor greater enthusiasm, nor more whole-souled freedom among workingmen. And the secret of it all was that this magnificent building was theirs. They, themselves, had spent one million two hundred thousand francs upon it. Here were twenty-four thousand families of working people, who were conducting their "self-help organization" upon a basis which was thoroughly democratic. They had a capital of three million francs, controlled twenty-four stores of different kinds in various parts of the city, and supported five additional branch social centres in the suburbs.

As the caretaker escorted me from room to room, we came to what appeared to be a lodge chamber, at the far end of which was a platform — not very deep, and which, apparently, was not used at all for the purpose of speechmaking or recital. The caretaker stopped when we reached this curious-looking structure, and on his pulling a string,

a curtain, apparently placed against the wall, parted; he flashed on a row of footlights, and I saw a great picture of Jesus Christ, with hand uplifted. He smiled as he saw my amazement, for we had been talking about clubs and classes, about coöperation and socialism, and not a word about religion or anything that suggested it.

"Why do you have this picture of Jesus here?" I asked. "Are many of your people Christian?"

"No," he replied; "I do not know of any who go to the churches." And seeing my increasing wonderment, he added, "We believe that Jesus was the first socialist, and that he was the great friend of the workingman. Jesus we honor, but for the churches who call themselves by his name, we have very little respect."

He then told me that the Catholic church across the way had offered them twenty-five thousand francs for the picture.

As I passed out of the building that night, I looked across at the church, — dark, dismal, uninviting, while the people ceaselessly thronged the streets, seeking that which would satisfy their restless, weary souls. And all that the Church could see in that splendid social centre of the people was a rather poor painting of the Son of God! To the Church, with its devotion to art and to æsthetics, this picture was the source of power with the people, and it thought to purchase it, so that the picture might become its own, hoping thus to win back those who had become alienated. But it was n't the picture, — it was life and hope and enthusiasm that were winning the day. Far better were the stained-glass windows and the paintings in the church, more beautiful the music, more refined the service, than anything of a like character ever seen or heard in this People's Palace. But not through these things could the Church ever

hope to attract men. It was the spirit — the atmosphere — that pervaded the institution across the way that told the story.

The spirit of democracy has gripped the people. This is the dominating influence in our twentieth-century problems. And whether we discuss the workingman in America or in England, in Turkey or in Russia, we shall find that here is the force that is fighting its way to the front in spite of every obstacle. For a long time the people fought for religious democracy, and they won. Then, for hundreds of years they shed their blood upon many a battlefield in their struggle for political democracy, and they conquered. They are now fighting for industrial democracy, and no human power can stop their onward march. But even in the things in which they have already been victorious, they are demanding the heritage of their fathers which has been stolen from them. That which has cost the best blood

of the human race has been purloined by grafters and unscrupulous politicians. The cry of the people has gone up to heaven that God should again manifest his power in behalf of the common people, — those who once heard Jesus gladly.

Five hundred thousand men in Great Britain are formed into a brotherhood; practically all of whom are workingmen. Significant, indeed, is the fact that they have selected as their battle-hymn the fine old poem written by Ebenezer Elliott, son of a Rotherham iron-founder, and sometimes known as "the Robert Burns of England."

When wilt Thou save the people?
O God of mercy, when?
Not kings alone, but nations!
Not thrones and crowns, but men!
Flowers of thy heart, O God, are they;
Let them not pass, like weeds, away —
Their heritage a sunless day.
God save the people!

Shall crime bring crime forever,
  Strength aiding still the strong?
Is it thy will, O Father,
  That man shall toil for wrong?
"No," say thy mountains: "No," Thy
    skies;
Man's clouded sun shall brightly rise,
And songs ascend instead of sighs;
    God save the people!

When wilt Thou save the people?
  O God of mercy, when?
The people, Lord, the people,
  Not thrones and crowns, but men;
God save the people; Thine they are,
Thy children, as thine angels fair;
From vice, oppression, and despair,
  God save the people!

In this they are expressing the hope of the masses, who are no longer overawed by pomp and show, by wealth and power, nor by the people whose doings the historian records while he forgets all about our common humanity.

In any discussion as to the attitude of labor toward the Church, this larger influence must always be borne in mind, for it has more to do with the changing social atmosphere among the masses than has any other single factor. This hope of the coming democracy has altered the life of the people in even the most distressing tenement districts. While there is still the same poverty, and in some sections even more of it, nevertheless, the people have taken on new spirit and new life, and the meanest proletarian looks forward to the day when he and his children shall come into their inheritance, and when they shall enjoy the larger, fuller life, which, down in their hearts, they believe God intended for them.

The occasion of one of the most bitter criticisms of the Church by the workingman is his belief that the Church as an institution has always stood in the way of his material progress. He declares that the

Church has always upheld the existing order of things, no matter how hard he may have been pressed by these conditions. It has always stood by the ruling class, because it believed that its very life depended upon this class, and it did not dare to oppose the men or the government which gave it support. The workingman tells us that the Church, because of its extreme conservatism, has always been the last institution to accept any reform measure which may have been introduced, and that it has been literally compelled to fall into line. He argues that, no matter what inference concerning freedom from slavery the preachers of our day may draw from the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles, nevertheless, the Church actually advocated slavery less than one hundred years ago, because the governing class owned the slaves. And even after the country decided that slavery was a curse and that it must go, and

after men outside the Church accepted the conditions against which they had fought, and sacrificed nearly everything that was worth while because of their convictions, the great denominations went on quarreling concerning these issues; and, even in our own day, some of the churches in the North and in the South cannot work in harmony because of these old prejudices.

The workingman looks upon these hatreds with contempt, and wonders how it is going to benefit him and his class to become identified with an institution which contains so much bitterness with regard to dead issues, while, as a matter of fact, there is more real brotherhood exhibited in his own organizations. The narrowness of the Church in this respect repels him. It is true that this situation has been greatly exaggerated in his own mind, but there is sufficient ground for this prejudice to give him fairly good cause for his criticism.

The workingman believes that the Church has not altogether gotten rid of its favoritism toward the capitalist class. He insists that in nearly every struggle for better conditions, the Church either holds itself aloof from him, or else comes out openly against him. In its strenuous insistence that "it represents all classes and therefore cannot take sides," it happens that the Church does not represent any class, but earns the contempt of all classes. It is neither respected by the powerful, whose interests are conserved because of its silence, nor honored by the lowly, whose struggles it ignores.

The Church criticises the workingman because of the methods which he adopts, declaring that it cannot stand sponsor for such unchristian ideals and practices, forgetting that one need not go very far back into its own history to find duplicated nearly everything that we deplore in Organized Labor to-day, even down to the boycotting

and the slugging. To quote from Dean Hodges: —

The spirit in England, for example, in the course of the ecclesiastical disturbances of the reigns of Henry, Edward, Mary, and Elizabeth, was closely akin to that which animates the union at its worst. The matter then at stake was the religious supremacy of England. The establishment for the time being was to all intents and purposes a union. In the reign of Mary, the union was the United Catholics of England. They were determined that no non-unionist should hold ecclesiastical office in that realm, and that no citizen should be baptized, or confirmed, or receive the sacrament of the altar, or be married, or be buried, except at the hands of an official of the union. Non-unionists were insulted, fined, forbidden the right of assembly, and boycotted. Some of the more obstinate and aggressive were put to death. Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer were burned at the stake as non-union bishops. In Elizabeth's day the union was the Brotherhood of Anglican Churchmen. In Cromwell's day, it was the Amalgamated Association of Congregationalists and Presbyterians. They all behaved alike, doing the same kind of thing for which we

now reprobate the workingman. So they did in New England, when they whipped the non-union Baptists and the non-union Quakers. It all belongs together. Whoever would understand what the union means to the working class, has but to read Church history. The unionist is actuated by the same motives which made good men persecute their brethren. We have now grown wiser. We have many of us come to understand that no cause is advanced by that sort of strife. The unionists will learn the same lesson. In the meantime, let every offense of his against the law and order of the community, and against the liberty of the citizen, be sharply punished; but let us remember how our fathers acted, how conscientiously and how mistakenly.

We find the Church advocating certain of the practices of the trades-union, to which, however, it objects in the union itself. Some Presbyteries will not permit a minister to accept a call to a church if the amount of the salary offered is not up to the standard or "union rate." The American Presbyterian General Assembly of 1909 voted in favor of

a "minimum rate" which shall be paid a minister, although, of course, it has n't the power to enforce its "scale." This is left in the hands of Presbyteries, if they desire to make it operative, and some of them are doing it.

It is true that the ministers' association is not a labor union, in that it bars out anybody who desires to preach because he does not possess a "union card," or, to speak ecclesiastically, his ordination papers. But in actual practice, the ministers' associations guard more jealously the rights of their membership than does the average labor union. This is justified, because everything must be done "decently and in order"; but the trades-unionist makes the same claim. He, too, recognizes that there may be superior men who can afford to remain out of the union, and who will not jeopardize the well-being of the craft, just as there are some men who may preach effectively and help-

fully practice the functions of the minister, even though not ordained; but there are vast numbers of others who need to be brought within the discipline of the trades organization, just as the average candidate for the gospel ministry needs to be held within the bounds prescribed by the ecclesiastical organization. These rules are necessary, not alone for the maintenance of the trades organization and the ministers' association, but for the good of society as a whole.

However unjust the workingman may be in his criticism of the Church, he feels that the Church is unjust in its criticism of him. The Church has looked merely upon the surface, never once seeing the principles which underlie certain of his actions. He feels that the Church is assuming an attitude of pharisaical supremacy which is not justified by the facts as he knows them, or as he thinks he knows them. He resents being

looked down upon as a creature who is so far gone that his every act must necessarily be vicious or vile. With his organization misunderstood and his actions misconstrued, the workingman will have nothing to do with an institution which criticises without knowledge, and condemns without investigation. It is amusing to hear some evangelists and certain preachers report with great satisfaction that "a man who once belonged to a labor union" professed conversion or joined the Church. As though the mere fact that a workingman was or is a trades-unionist or even a socialist is sufficient to characterize him as a sinner beyond the ordinary run of men. Such a position on the part of the representatives of the Church has disgusted large numbers of intelligent artisans.

The workingman does not care about the ecclesiastical discussions which occupy so much of the time of ministers' organizations, and which have to do with hair-split-

ting arguments that have absolutely no relationship to present-day human problems. The workingman is not particularly attracted by the preaching of a liberal theology, as so many who are *not* workingmen are insisting; because, if he were, the Unitarian and the Universalist churches would be crowded by workingmen; but he has no patience with a Church or a group of ministers who are more interested in the discussion of an abstract point in theology than they are in the pressing moral problems of the twentieth century. To the average workingman, the Church seems more concerned about the sweet by and by than about the bitter here and now. The Church seems to fail in touching life in a human way. It is an institution separate and apart from life as he knows it. It does not get down to the actuality of things as he has to do with them. The average workingman feels that the average minister talks about facts and forces

which do not come within the range of his own thought and experience. The workingman wonders why the minister spends so much time discussing the social problems of the Israelites, the Jebusites, the Hivites, and the Hittites, and pays so little attention to those of the Pittsburghites, the Chicagoites, the Brooklynites, and the Bostonites. He cannot understand why the Israels, the Isaacs, and the Jacobs of the long ago should be so much more fascinating to the student of the Bible in the Church and in the Sunday School, than the Vaclavs and the Giuseppes and the Michaels of the present day. The minister seems to live in the clouds six days in the week, coming down to earth on the seventh day to deliver a message which is supposed to help men who are compelled to live on the earth every day in the week.

To be sure, he sometimes sees the minister on the street on Monday, but his

clothes and his talk and his life all seem to be related to a world which is n't the workingman's world. There are many exceptions to this, but to the average workingman the ministers, as a whole, are neither men nor women, — they are in a class all their own. It may come as a shock to many ministers to learn that their sermons are on a lower intellectual level than are the addresses delivered by most labor leaders, and that the language employed in the labor hall is far more direct and very much clearer. The intelligent workingman has been trained in this environment, and he scorns the archaic language often employed in the church service, and the circumlocutionous speech of the minister. And all the while the average minister feels that he must "come down" to the level of the worker. The worker will not understand the problems of theology which the minister may learnedly discuss, but his own people do

not care very much about them, for that matter. But if he talks in real man-fashion about up-to-date questions, the minister will need to give the workingman the best he has.

Sometimes the workingman has n't very much use for the Church because he cannot see that the professing Christian employer treats his help any better than does the non-Christian employer. He points to the fact that in nearly every great industrial struggle it has been discovered that the man at the top was a churchman, and sometimes, when the conditions against which he has been fighting have been so palpably unjust that every one could see it, the employer still was active in the Church as an office-bearer, without condemnation or rebuke. Discipline has entirely departed from the Church, and men who are known to be grafters and law-breakers of the worst kind are retained upon the church rolls. It is

an unheard-of thing in recent years for a church court to dismiss a member because of unjust or even criminal practice, to say nothing about the most outrageous treatment of employees. To many toilers the modern Church is merely a "trump card" in the hands of the wealthy classes. They are no more Christian than are the heathen, toward whose conversion they contribute their ill-gotten riches. Indeed, "the ethics of many of them is lower than that of the jungle."

The laborer tells us that ministers — but principally prominent laymen — have systematically opposed social reform of every description, merely because it might reduce their profits. Child-labor laws, old-age pensions, free education, factory acts, housing reforms, and labor legislation of every sort have been fought by those who were prominent in the work of the Church. There has been no regard whatever for the lives of

women and children, and the introduction of safety appliances for their benefit has been opposed most bitterly by churchmen. The most strenuous opponent of better tenement-house laws in New York was a church corporation, owner of some of the worst tenements in the city. Fighting the passage of the Licensing Bill in the House of Commons last year, which meant practically the abolition of the saloon in Great Britain, but upon the fairest kind of a basis, was a company of prominent ministers and laymen who owned stock in breweries and distilleries, while the labor members in the House, to a man, fought for its passage. Laboring men feel that whatever they have gained in social reform, they have won not only without the Church, but often in spite of the Church. To most of them the Church is merely a great institution or machine, going through the motions, but never actually producing anything; it is a hotbed of

officialism, filled with a company of self-seekers. Largely, for these reasons, the Church is to-day composed of the bourgeois and so-called upper classes. The workingman — the artisan and the laborer — is n't present in very large numbers. It is true that in some towns, and even in some cities which are inhabited almost entirely by the laboring class, he is to be found in the churches; but in the great commercial centres, in which are found all classes of people, the fact of the workingman's alienation is very clearly marked. Not alone in the city, however, does this condition exist. The farm-hand is just as far removed from the Church as is his brother in the town, because the country also has its social and industrial problem, although the Church apparently has not yet realized this fact. The country church might well look about its own field, to see wherein it fails to reach the men who are working for wages.

The immigrant workingman is alienated from the Church. It does n't take him long to become Americanized in this respect, for even the Catholic Church no longer holds him to any extent after he has been in this country for a year or more. The churches have almost no hold upon the Italian, the Hungarian, the Bohemian, the Pole, the Russian Jew, — indeed, practically all of the races which are coming to our country by the million are or soon become indifferent to the Church. In many cases this alienation is due to the unchristian and often the unscrupulous action of church officials in their native lands, or it is attributable to the social and economic conditions under which the immigrants are compelled to live after they make their homes with us.

In France and Belgium the antagonism to the Church is quite marked among workingmen. This is largely due to socialistic and revolutionary influence. This applies

to many other European countries, particularly where the Church is dominated by the State. In Germany there is scarcely a minister who dares come out openly in favor of socialism, even though he may believe in it, because of the strong opposition of the government to this economic doctrine. However, there are in Germany two hundred and fifty thousand "Christian trades-unionists" who are identified with the Church, and who are practically under the tutelage of the clergy. They are despised by the socialist wing because of their loyalty to the Church. In England the feeling against the Church among the rank and file of workingmen is quite strong, — as strong, at any rate, as it is in America, although there are organizations for men affiliated with the Church, such as the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon, the Brotherhood, and the Adult Schools, which are holding large numbers of men in at least a nominal rela-

tionship with the Church. We, in America, have not succeeded in bringing about such an affiliation. It is quite a remarkable thing, also, that the majority of the labor members in Parliament — of whom there are about fifty — are identified directly with the Church. The chairman of the Labor Party in the House of Commons is Vice-President of the great Brotherhood to which reference has already been made, and these leaders of labor in Parliament are frequently called upon to speak at religious gatherings of various kinds, because of their sympathy with the Church. Indeed, most of the prominent labor leaders in Great Britain confess that they received their training as public speakers in the class meetings of the Methodist Church, and many of them have been local preachers. It is worthy of notice that whatever the rank and file of the workers may think of the Church, they are careful to select as their leaders men of unquestioned

character, and usually those who are total abstainers and members of the Church.

Whether or not the tendency of the workingman to remain away from the Church is increasing or decreasing has been variously decided. There are many students of this question who honestly believe that the gulf between the Church and Labor is widening and deepening, and that there is really no hope of a closing up of the gap. They prophesy that the Church will eventually collapse because it has lost the common people, upon whom it has always depended for its very life, and that the people will build upon its ruins another organization, which shall truly represent Jesus in the world. But, in recent years, many hopeful signs have appeared upon the horizon, — signs hopeful to the Church and to the workingman.

In connection with a recent Presbyterian General Assembly meeting, held in Kansas

City, the church and labor mass meeting held in Convention Hall on Sunday afternoon was attended by nearly fifteen thousand persons, at least half of whom were workingmen. It was not only the greatest meeting of the Presbyterian Assembly in Kansas City, but it was the most largely attended meeting in the over one hundred years of its history. It is significant that the meeting which holds this record should be one so largely composed of that class which is supposed to be alienated from the Church.

The writer has long had standing offers from dozens of cities to address big crowds of workingmen in halls and theatres, under the auspices of central labor bodies. The expenses are to be borne by the workingmen themselves, and the topics discussed to be selected by the speaker. Many such meetings have been held, to the evident satisfaction of both the Church and the workingmen. Practically every Sunday af-

ternoon, during the winter season, is employed in speaking to mass meetings of workingmen, sometimes under the direction of Young Men's Christian Associations or Church Brotherhoods, although some of the best meetings are held by the churches themselves, and in their own buildings. The audiences rarely number less than one thousand, while there have been meetings at which ten and fifteen thousand were present, the men themselves coöperating in making them successful. The greatest "labor meetings" being held to-day are conducted under church auspices. They exceed in numbers and in interest those held directly under the auspices of the trades-unions themselves.

In one hundred and twenty-five cities in the United States the ministers' associations and the central labor unions are exchanging fraternal delegates, the ministers and workingmen regularly meeting with

each other's organizations, and freely taking part in the discussions. There are about one hundred and seventy-five ministers serving in this capacity. This exchange of delegates is resulting in a more cordial relationship between the Church and Labor. In many instances the ministers are elected to the office of chaplain, and the regular meetings of the union are opened with prayer. This plan has the hearty and unanimous endorsement of the American Federation of Labor, the federation having passed the following resolution: —

Resolved, That the American Federation of Labor recommends that all affiliated State and Central Bodies exchange fraternal delegates with the various State and City ministerial associations, wherever practicable, thus insuring a better understanding on the part of the Church and clergy of the aims and objects of the labor union movement of America.

When the Presbyterian Church inaugurated its Department of Church and Labor,

this denomination being the first to branch out officially in this direction, the American Federation adopted the resolution which follows: —

Whereas, the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, at its last National Convention, officially established a Department of Church and Labor for the express purpose of making a systematic study of the labor problem; and

Whereas, It is part of the plan of this department to appoint in every industrial centre special committees that may become experts in their knowledge of every phase of the labor movement, so that they may inform the churches with respect to the aims of organized labor; *Therefore*, be it

Resolved, That the American Federation of Labor, in convention assembled, indorse this new and significant movement in the Presbyterian Church, and we further recommend that Central Labor Bodies coöperate with this department and with its subcommittees in every way that may be consistent, in order that the Church and the public at large may have a more intelligent conception of the conditions and aspirations of the toilers.

Not many years ago, the same federation would probably have scorned any sort of an approach on the part of a church organization. The above resolution was adopted not only unanimously, but with considerable enthusiasm.

At a recent conference of ministers who were discussing the question of attracting workingmen to the Church, several of them, who have been active in the work of dealing directly with artisans, — most of them being fraternal delegates to central labor bodies, — declared that the number of workingmen in their congregations had grown from about ten per cent to figures varying from forty to sixty per cent.

Church and Labor throughout the United States have, during the past four years, been observing "Labor Sunday" on the Sunday before Labor Day, by holding special services in the churches, which have been attended by thousands of men who had not

previously gone to church in many years. In many cases the men have marched in bodies to the service from their meeting-places.

National conventions of labor, which heretofore have been closed to ministers of the gospel, are now opened with prayer by local ministers, ministerial fraternal delegates are received, they are appointed upon important committees, and time is given to a discussion of the relation of the Church to Labor, the addresses of the ministers being invariably received with enthusiasm.

These are some of the most conspicuous signs on Labor's side of this question. Others there are, and probably of still greater significance, but there are sufficient reasons why they should not be made public.

While there is considerable "alienation of the workingman from the Church," there is no other class of men among whom there is this conspicuous movement *toward* the Church.

II

THE ATTITUDE OF THE CHURCH TOWARD LABOR

THIRTY-THREE denominations, representing eighteen million church members and nearly forty million adherents, spoke officially with reference to the Church's attitude toward Labor, at the meeting of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, held in Philadelphia in December, 1908. The resolutions unanimously adopted at that time were the most significant that had ever come before a church council of any sort, being far in advance of anything else passed by any of the denominational assemblies or councils. It is not possible to reproduce here the entire statement and recommendations, but after a very bold and clearly stated presentation

of the industrial situation and the Church's relation to it in a general way, the Council said: —

We deem it the duty of all Christian people to concern themselves directly with certain practical industrial problems. To us it seems that the churches must stand —

For equal rights and complete justice for all men in all stations in life.

For the right of all men to the opportunity for self-maintenance, a right ever to be wisely and strongly safeguarded against encroachments of every kind.

For the right of workers to some protection against the hardships often resulting from the swift crisis of industrial change.

For the principle of conciliation and arbitration in industrial dissensions.

For the protection of the worker from dangerous machinery, occupational disease, injuries and mortality.

For the abolition of child labor.

For such regulation of the conditions of toil for women as shall safeguard the physical and moral health of the community.

For the suppression of the "sweating system."

For the gradual and reasonable reduction of the hours of labor to the lowest practicable point, and for that degree of leisure for all which is a condition of the highest human life.

For a release from employment one day in seven.

For a living wage as a minimum in every industry, and for the highest wage that each industry can afford.

For the most equitable division of the products of industry that can be ultimately devised.

For suitable provision for the old age of the workers and for those incapacitated by injury.

For the abatement of poverty.

To the toilers of America and to those who by organized effort are seeking to lift the crushing burdens of the poor, and to reduce the hardships and uphold the dignity of labor, this Council sends the greeting of human brotherhood and the pledge of sympathy and of help in a cause which belongs to all who follow Christ.

The Council recommended to the several Christian bodies represented, —

That the churches more fully recognize, through their pulpits, press, and public assemblies, the great

work of social reconstruction which is now in progress, the character, extent, and ethical value of the labor movement, the responsibilities of Christian men for the formation of social ideals, and the obligation of the churches to supply the spiritual motive and standards for all movements which aim to realize in the modern social order the fulfillment of the second great commandment, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself";

That the study of existing conditions in the industrial world, their origin and outcome, be more definitely enforced as an immediate Christian duty;

That to this end, in all theological seminaries, and, so far as practicable, in other schools and colleges, there be established, wherever they do not now exist, courses in economics, sociology, and the social teachings of Jesus, supplemented, wherever possible, by investigation of concrete social facts, and that study classes and reading courses on social questions be instituted in connection with the churches and their societies to foster an intelligent appreciation of existing conditions, and to create a public sentiment through which relief and reform may be more effectively secured;

That the churches, with quickened zeal and keener

appreciation, through their pastors, lay leaders, and members, wherever possible, enter into sympathetic and fraternal relations with workingmen, by candid public discussion of the problems which especially concern them, by advocating their cause when just, by finding the neighborly community of interest, and by welcoming them and their families to the uses and privileges of the local churches;

That the proper general authorities of the denominations endeavor by special bureau or department to collate facts and mould opinion in the interest of a better understanding between the Church and workingmen, and particularly to obtain a more accurate and general knowledge of the meaning of trades-unionism, and especially that all church members who, either as employers or as members of trades-unions, are more specifically involved in the practical problems of industry, be urged to accept their unparalleled opportunity for serving the cause of Christ and humanity by acting, in his spirit, as mediators between opposing forces in our modern world of work;

That the Church in general not only aim to socialize its message, to understand the forces which now dispute its supremacy, to stay by the people in

the effort to solve with them their problems, but also modify its own equipment and procedure in the interest of more democratic administration and larger social activity;

That the Church fail not to emphasize its own relation, throughout the centuries and in the life of the world to-day, to the mighty movements which make for the betterment of social and industrial conditions.

These resolutions will stand for many years to come as the Church's expression of its sympathy for the masses. Already they have been extensively printed in the labor press of America, and the various denominations are using them as their official statements with reference to the social problems of the times.

Some of the leading denominations have established departments in the interest of workingmen, notable among them in the United States being the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Unitarians, and the Episcopalians, while the Methodists

and the Baptists have appointed strong committees of social service. In Canada, the Methodists and the Presbyterians have departments or bureaus of social reform, and a number of the churches in England, Scotland, and Australia are considering the matter of inaugurating similar enterprises. In most cases, these departments and committees have secretaries or superintendents who give all their time to the work, outlining methods of work to be carried on by the individual churches and ministers' organizations.

Through the work of these departments, the denominations are expressing their attitude toward labor. In every case, this expression has been most sympathetic. It cannot truthfully be said by the workingman that, in so far as the official declarations of the churches are concerned, they have been negligent or indifferent. There is little to be desired in this respect. The unfort-

unate thing is that the churches have not always lived up to their own ideals. They have been too easily satisfied with resolutions, and they have done too little in the way of practical demonstration of their sympathy.

For many years, some of the churches have maintained "social unions" and societies "for improving the conditions of workingmen" and "the securing of social justice." Elaborate organizations have been perfected, with long lists of bishops and other church dignitaries as officers, some of whom have long since forgotten that they had been thus honored. An extensive literature on social questions has been issued, and "mass meetings" have been held in the interest of these enterprises. But outside of their own little coteries, practically nobody has known of their existence. The workingmen, who were supposed to be the direct recipients of whatever blessings might

flow from them, knew nothing about them. Organizations of this sort rarely meet with the success which they deserve, but in most cases they are mere fads of the Church, gotten up by some earnest souls who have come to have an academic interest in "the masses." But when they have come up against the blood and the fire of the labor problem, they have usually lost heart, and they have been easily persuaded to desist. Meanwhile, they have convinced themselves that they were actually making a great impression upon the Church and upon the workingman. The trouble of it is that these men and women have been overshadowed by a disheartening institutionalism and formalism. There is a lack of genuine enthusiasm in the Church for such endeavors. One may secure the passage of social resolutions by the score at any church convention. There are piled-up documents of this sort which might give any church court occasion for

feeling proud of its attitude with reference to the social question. But in scarcely a single instance are these resolutions ever put into actual practice. It is a comfortable feeling to know that they are there, to be referred to when any one, especially the workingman, questions the relationship of the Church to the problems that are perplexing him.

But why not be perfectly honest about it, and confess that these resolutions mean absolutely nothing; that they are the work of some man who dared to challenge the Church, and the Church, not caring to oppose, simply swallowed them at one gulp, but with really no thought that anything would ever be done with them?

The Church will never bring about the great social reforms which are pressing, until a few strong, fearless men are willing to sacrifice everything, if need be, to accomplish the objects which are very clearly set

forth in our convention-passed resolutions. This does not mean that *any* set of men may bring this to pass; they must be men who have a special gift for such a task, — men who can see and feel, and are willing to suffer, if need be, even as Christ suffered. And the Church, itself, will bring to them the bitterest suffering.

There is no doubt that the Church has always been the whitest light in history. No matter how dark the age, the Church has stood out as a torch; it was sometimes a smoky torch, but it was ofttimes the only torch that showed men the way. But the masses to-day are not very much concerned about what the Church has been in history. They know that the people in the churches to-day had very little to do with the glorious traditions of the Church, and they are demanding that they indicate their interest in present-day problems. And the masses are right. If the Church cares about

those things which trouble the people, it should come out so clearly, not only in the passing of fine-sounding resolutions, but in the actual performance of its duty, that there would no longer be any doubt in their minds as to its sincerity.

In scarcely a moral and civic campaign in these days is the Church as such considered to be the leader, if, indeed, it is even a direct participant. Few pay any attention to the actions taken by ministers' associations; and Church Brotherhoods, and other men's organizations in the Church are notoriously weak in municipal reform, when one thinks of their possibilities. At their conventions, they threaten and scold; but the statesmen, even those who are in the Church, prefer to do their work through some other agency, because, as one of them put it, "these church men don't stay on the job." If the Protestant churches of America, for instance, with their millions of ad-

herents, were to become really alive, there is absolutely nothing in the way of reform, municipal and social, which they could not accomplish, in so far, of course, as men may do these things. The Church *is* responsible for the injustices and the wrongs now being suffered by vast numbers of people, because the Church could right them if it would; not all the wrongs, to be sure, but most of them.

This does not mean that a church assembly or council could accomplish these things, especially by the passing of resolutions. But if the men who are in the Church, and who constitute the Church if anybody does, were to resolve that these evils should be wiped out, they would disappear, because those men have the money and the influence and know what needs to be done. Those outside the Church cannot be held responsible for the neglect and the weakness of the Church. It is plainly a situation which the Church, itself, must meet.

It is too late in the day to say that the Church has nothing to do with social reform. Conservative men may bewail the evil days upon which we have fallen, and deplore the fact that the Church can no longer take refuge in the seclusiveness of the cloister, or in the single purpose of preaching the "simple gospel." That day will never return. Such methods may have sufficed in a period when the world was satisfied to accept the ecclesiasticism of the mediæval period, or the type of evangelism which leaves out of account vast areas of human experience. The true gospel of Jesus Christ is as wide as human need, and as deep as the human heart can feel. Any other kind of a gospel is an insult to him who gave it to us, and a slander upon his Christianity.

A re-reading of the splendid platform adopted by the Federal Council will convince any one that that body committed itself pretty thoroughly to the social programme.

There is no getting away from the fact that the churches here represented pledged themselves to the securing of social justice. It seems like a truism to say that the Church believes in bringing in a reign of righteousness. If it is n't here for that purpose, it has no business to be here at all. But read again those resolutions, and then try to indicate how the Church, as an organization, is actually and definitely trying to usher in the conditions called for. Take such a matter as "the abolition of child labor." Where are the representatives of the Church when committees are appearing before the legislatures to plead for the enactment of a law which will make it a reality? The labor union is there. The social settlement will have its representative. The woman's club may send its delegates. But the Church is rarely, if ever, present in the persons of its members. And why should it not be there? Is it any more unholy to be engaged in this

business than it is to be doing any one of a dozen other things which are regarded as legitimate church work, as, for instance, to spend an afternoon with the Ladies' Aid Society, sewing garments for the poor, or in teaching a class in the industrial school? Is n't it perfectly legitimate to save the *lives* of little children as well as their *souls?* Jesus surely meant that brightness and cheer in this life should come to those of whom he said: "Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Why cannot the Church send its committee to the legislature to make the plea that Jesus would make, were he here?

Again, the Federal Council declared that it would "advocate the cause of workingmen when their cause is just." Has anybody heard of any denomination, or any conspicuous church organization, since this resolution was passed, becoming the advocate of any body of workingmen who were making

a fight for a living wage or decent sanitary conditions? It would be a fine thing if we could point to such an instance as an illustration of what the Church is doing in behalf of workingmen. But the churches are silent on these questions. They dare not, or they will not, speak. There surely have been enough instances in which the Church would have been justified in protesting, but the Church has passed by on the other side and allowed the despised Samaritan — the labor leader or the man outside the Church — to step in and usurp the place which rightfully belongs to it.

The Brotherhoods connected with the various denominations of America are vainly searching for a great task, — something which will call out the heroic and the sublime in men. Here 's the job — it 's a man's job, too. No one else can do it. But do the men of the churches really want to get into the serious business of life-sav-

ing? Are n't they rather more content to sit around and talk and sing about it?

The Church has always been ready to offer comfort in times of distress and illness. It has always engaged in a magnificent philanthropy of which it may well be proud. It has visited the sick and fed the hungry. But it has not loved its neighbor as it loved itself. It is not going to the root of social suffering, and attempting to cut it out. It is not sufficient to say that if all the workingmen would become converted, all the social ills of the world would be healed. The workingmen are guilty, in large measure, but they are not the only guilty ones. If the Church were one half as strenuous in its attempts to reach the "classes" as it is to reach the "masses," the social problem would be got at. It is only fair that the sinner at the top should be given as much attention as the sinner at the bottom. It may be said that the rich are being preached to

every Sabbath day, but they are not appealed to so directly and so specifically as are the poor. We take it upon ourselves to say many things to the workingman that we do not dare say to his employer, because the workingman is helpless and he does n't own the pews in our churches.

Many a church is getting a great deal of comfort out of the fact that it is conducting a mission for workingmen, which, in most cases, is situated on a side street, in a dark, dingy, dirty building, and is managed by a man to whom the Church is paying a pitifully small salary, usually because he is a student or a worn-out preacher. But this sort of a mission will never attract workingmen. It will not even attract those apparently miserable foreigners in the neighborhood, because they have been accustomed to worship in the most beautiful cathedrals in Europe. We cannot give them the magnificent buildings with which they have

been familiar, but we can at least give them clean, cheerful halls or churches. Furthermore, in the average mission, there is n't the slightest trace of the spirit of democracy which the workingman meets in almost every other relationship in life, — in labor union, lodge, club, saloon. The enterprise seems to ignore all the laws of psychology, to say nothing about the spirit of democracy. The leaders of our religious institutions seem to have lost sight of a fact that they have long since learned in business life, namely, that there is nothing that a workingman despises more heartily than a spirit of patronage or paternalism.

Frequently, a church will imagine that the introduction of institutional features will save the day, and forthwith an elaborate organization is perfected which it is hoped will capture the community. But institutional work, while very useful and very commendable, is by no means a solvent of

the social question, nor does the workingman always respond to such an appeal. The great misfortune is that the average church looks upon these features as merely a means to an end, — which end, by the way, is simply the enlargement of the church roll. Such an attitude is altogether wrong, and contrary to the spirit of Jesus, who healed the sick, not that they might come to hear him preach, but because he had compassion upon them, and because they needed healing.

The Church should engage in social work in behalf of the people, but it should do this work even though it does not result in a single accession to the church which is doing it. The fact of the matter is, that in many cases the people who have been helped will unite with some other church where their former poverty is unknown. It is also true that the general impression made upon the community always results in a

softening of the feeling toward the church that is doing an unselfish work, even among those who themselves are not the direct recipients of the favor of the church. Thus the Kingdom has been extended, and this is worth while. Incidentally, those who have been influenced in other fields will come to the church which seems to be getting no direct results from its social work. In this way there is frequently an exchange of courtesies between the churches.

One of the principal reasons why the Church seems not to understand the social and the industrial problem is the fact that the ministry is recruited almost entirely from the farming, the commercial, and the professional classes. Very few workingmen, fresh from the ranks of the toilers in the shop, the mill, the mine, and the factory, go into the ministry. It often happens that a workingman's son will study in the theological school, but it is rarely true that he

carries with him the workingman's spirit, largely because he has really never known it. He has never experienced the real trials of an artisan or laboring man. He may even have worked with the laboring man during his boyhood days and seen much of the life of his class, but in most instances he will have seen only the petty commonplace things, which often make one impatient with the workingman, or which, perhaps, make one sympathetic only in the smaller affairs of life. But the great pressing problems of artisan manhood he has never known. The responsibilities of the care of a workingman's family he knows nothing about. And all too frequently, if he has known these things, the training and the atmosphere of the school and the seminary have almost completely obliterated them from his heart and mind. The system of education in practically all of our schools is not calculated to increase one's sympathy for or interest in

the artisan class, except in an academic way. The workingman is considered a good subject for sociological investigation, and his home is ruthlessly invaded by faddists bent on securing alleged facts for fool speeches, or students who are seeking information for the preparation of theses which shall earn them their degrees of Ph. D.

The theological seminaries do not prepare men to meet the situation adequately. Their courses of study are antiquated, and their professors as a class know nothing, and seem to care less, about the questions that trouble the masses. They take refuge behind the worn-out excuse that the simple gospel will solve all these problems, without knowing what the problems are.

As most of the graduates of the seminary are country-bred men, they have no conception as to the difficulties and the heart-breaking situations which so often confront

the city workingman. They know nothing about the great undercurrents which are influencing the masses. They are entirely ignorant of the aims and objects of the labor movement, as expressed either in the trades-union or in socialism. To them these movements are simply breeders of a social unrest, and they have come to have the notion that it is their business to put down social unrest, forgetting that it is really the business of the Church to create social unrest.

There are no labor troubles in Darkest Africa, but the dynamics of the gospel will soon create them. The Christian missionaries have found a continent of people satisfied with low physical, mental, and moral ideals. It is the object of the missionaries to create among the heathen a healthy dissatisfaction with these conditions, by showing them the possibilities of the Christian life. When this awakening comes, it will have no rest until it breaks the bands which

bound them through many a century. It has always been so with the Church. But having aroused this spirit of social unrest in the world, is the Church to step aside and permit the unscrupulous agitator to come in, taking for himself the place of leadership which the Church has created for itself, or will the Church retain the position which belongs to it, by virtue of its work and its history?

The greatest question before the Church to-day with reference to its attitude toward labor is whether or not it is willing to lead the people in their fight for democracy, — to lead them unselfishly and with a fine devotion to its own highest ideals.

III

THE ETHICAL VALUE OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT

A STUDY of the reform movements during the past century will reveal the fact that workingmen have had more to do with their inauguration than any other class.

Mr. Gladstone said, shortly before he passed away: "I painfully reflect that in almost every great political controversy of the last fifty years, the leisured classes, the educated classes, the wealthy classes, the titled classes, have been in the wrong." The common people, — the toilers, the men of uncommon sense, — these have been responsible for nearly all of the social reform measures which the world to-day accepts. And whenever organized labor has had an opportunity to do so, it has expressed itself

very emphatically with regard to these questions, in most cases, long before any other organized body of men cared to commit themselves to them.

The labor movement is a world movement. Cordial relationships are sustained between the various national and international organizations. They are discussing the same problems. They are fighting the same conditions. They are seeking to inaugurate practically the same remedies. While the ruling classes have been at war with one another, the working classes have been conferring as to how they might raise the standard of living for all mankind. The circular calling together the first great Coal Miners' Convention said: "Let there be no English, no Irish, no Germans, Scotch or Welsh, for we are brethren."

It was the labor organizations that took the first step toward forgetting the hatreds of the Civil War. In 1885 the veterans of

both the Union and the Confederate armies, who were members of the Knights of Labor, formed an organization called the Gray and the Blue. Their motto was a most impressive one: "Capital divided, labor unites us."

Every man who becomes a member of the American Federation of Labor accepts the following: —

We are pledged to the emancipation of our class from poverty, ignorance, and selfishness; to be respectful in word and action to every woman; to be considerate to the widow and the orphan, the weak and the defenseless; and never to discriminate against a fellow worker on account of creed, color, or nationality; to defend freedom of thought, whether expressed by tongue or pen; to educate ourselves and our fellow workers in the history of the labor movement. We promise that we will never knowingly wrong a brother or see him wronged, if in our power to prevent it. We will endeavor to subordinate every selfish impulse to the task of elevating the material, intellectual, and moral conditions of the entire laboring class.

On the color question the trades-union has always been far in advance of any other organization. Even in the South, where race hatred is so prevalent, the negroes have been admitted into the trades-unions, while they have been barred from other organizations that are antagonistic to organized labor. The color barriers have been broken down by labor unions, and not his color but his character bars the negro, when he is rejected. It is quite true that individual labor unions have sometimes sinned in this respect, but wherever the sentiment of organized workingmen has been manifested against the negro, it will be found that this same spirit has been prevalent to even a greater extent in the churches and in civic and commercial organizations.

In 1846, when the churches were, as the abolitionists said, the "bulwarks of American slavery," when Garrison and Thompson and Pillsbury were being mobbed by college

students, and when the slaveholders were masters of Congress and the courts of law, a labor convention at Lynn passed this courageous resolution: "We wish to secure to our three million brethren and sisters groaning in chains on the southern plantations the same rights and privileges for which we are contending."

It was among the labor guilds of the apostolic days that the gospel had its freest course. So true is this that in a volume entitled "Ancient Lowly," the author declares that Christianity was simply a movement of organized labor. To quote from this most interesting volume: —

> We must introduce here the quite singular but perfectly natural fact that wherever the unions were thoroughly established and, so to speak, nested together, the Christian church was sure to first plant itself. Thus Pergamos, the seat of the great uprising of workingmen under Aristonicus in B. C. 133–129, became the mellow ground wherein the early Chris-

tians planted, and on which they reared one of their most celebrated churches. . . . Cappadocia, which did not fall into Roman hands until A. D. 17, was also one of the early posts of the Christians. The first epistle of St. Peter bears this name. Here, too, the labor brotherhoods had a strong foothold. This is rendered certain by the recent discovery of several of their slabs and monuments bearing inscriptions. Laodicea was also a stronghold of both the unions and the early Christians. This place, together with Ephesus and Hieropolis, is where were founded the seven Apocalyptic churches. The early church found mellow souls among the brotherhoods of the *eranoi* and *thiasoi*.

Apamea, near Antioch, the birthplace of Eunus, instigator of the greatest of all the slave uprisings, was also the cradle of one of the early churches. We have, in our account of this great strike, shown that Eunus and his men seemed both to be deeply imbued with the everywhere present idea of the Messiah, who was to redeem the world, and also thoroughly acquainted with the methods of secret organization. His knowledge of the auspices and plan of organization were really at the base of his success. These things, added to inscriptions found in the vicinity of

labor unions of an antiquity coeval with this great servile war, show very plainly why Christianity took root so readily in those regions of Asia.

The labor movement has become to thousands of workingmen a substitute for the Church. Socialism means more than an economic system to many who have embraced it. It has become to them a religion. The ethical value of the trades-union is rarely appreciated. The average outsider regards it as a militant organization, which has brought into combination large numbers of workingmen for the sole purpose of securing better wages and shorter hours. It is quite true that this is an important part of the trades-union's function, but its efforts are by no means confined to this limited operation. In many American and European cities the trades-unions have erected labor temples, which are devoted to the exclusive use of trades-unionists and their families. These buildings have become im-

portant social centres. The various locals in the city hold their meetings in halls which are set apart for this purpose, and here the "walking delegates" or business agents have their offices, to which the unemployed workingman comes in order to secure employment, for it is part of the business agent's function to find work for the members of his organization.

Frequently, helpful lecture courses are given. And there is a moral value in the regular meetings of the union which is not to be despised. The discipline of the average labor union meeting is of great value to the inexperienced laborer. He comes into contact with forces which drill him mentally and morally to such a degree that his ethical standards are bound to be advanced. He soon comes to realize that he cannot force a particular measure upon his associates. He must possess the facts, and he must know how to present them, in order

to have his way. For these workingmen think independently in their labor halls. They do not blindly follow their leaders, as is generally supposed. The office of the "walking delegate" is by no means the sinecure which most people imagine it is. Every man has a fair chance to present his views, no matter how unpopular he or they may be. He learns the lesson of subordination to the will of others, which is always a good discipline. Incidentally, and almost unconsciously, the value of brotherhood, of coöperation, of team work, are impressed upon him. The sacrifices that he makes in behalf of others have a salutary effect.

If the trades-union is a militant organization, — and it is, — it also has its value in times of peace. Very little is known about the immense sums of money which are expended in caring for the sick, the unemployed, the widows, and the orphans. The International Typographical Union sup-

ports in Colorado a million-dollar home for the use of its members who are suffering from tuberculosis, or who have become incapacitated on account of old age or illness. The Cigarmakers' Union, with a membership of forty-five thousand, disbursed during the past twenty-eight years over eight million dollars in sick and other benefits. The International Association of Machinists is typical of a large number of other trades-unions in the matter of sick and death benefits. Members who are out of work on account of a grievance, approved by the General Executive Board, and who have been three months in continuous good standing, receive six dollars per week. Married men, and single men with others dependent upon them for support, receive eight dollars per week, and apprentices receive one half of this rate. Members who are unemployed because of their faithfulness to the trades-union receive the same amount

of money as though they were out on strike. A member, having attained the age of sixty-five years, who has been ten consecutive years in good standing, is entitled to $500, and at sixty-eight years of age, with twenty years to his credit, he receives the sum of $1000.

Death benefits are as follows: Six months' continuous good standing, $50; one year, $75; two years, $100; three years, $150; four years, $200. A trades-unionist rarely, if ever, applies to a charity organization society for relief.

Carroll D. Wright said, in one of his reports to the United States Congress, that the trades-union is performing an invaluable service in Americanizing the immigrant, and he adds:—

The records of this office show that during an investigation of building and loan associations a few years ago, information from the Bohemians, the Polish, and other clannish associations of that char-

acter could be obtained only through the services of an interpreter. It was found that as soon as a Bohemian or a Pole heard the word "government," or "government agent," he closed his mouth and it was impossible to secure any information.

This has been true in other investigations, notably in collecting family budgets; but with an intelligent interpreter, using their own language, the nature of the work was explained, and no further difficulty experienced. The union is breaking down this trait of character in the foreigners of the nationalities mentioned. This it is doing, not as a matter of philanthropy, but from a selfish necessity. The immigrant must be taught that he must stand straight up on his own feet; that the ward politician is dependent on him, — on his vote, etc., — and not he on the ward politician. In this way he first learns that he is a part of the government; and while this is done by indirection, in a large sense, there is no other force that is doing it at all. The Pole, the Bohemian, the Lithuanian, the Slovak, and to a much lesser degree the Galician, have inherited the feeling that somehow government is a thing inimical to their natural development, — a power forcing itself upon them from afar; an intrusive power for repression, taxation,

punishment only; a thing which they must stand in awe of, obey, pay tribute to, and wish that it had not come among their people, even if they did not secretly hate it, — a thing, in short, which ought not to be. Being weaker than it, they must be silent in its presence; and if forced to speak, lie, as for them to tell the truth would mean imprisonment or death. . . .

It is doubtful if any organization other than a trades-union could accomplish these things, for only the bread and butter necessity would be potent enough as an influence to bring these people out of the fixed forms and crystallizations of life into which they have been compressed. Certain it is that no other organization is attempting to do this work, at least not by amalgamation, which is the only way assimilation can be secured among the various foreign elements. The drawing of these people away from their petty clique leaders and getting them to think for themselves upon one line of topics, namely, the industrial conditions and the importance of trade organization, result in a mental uplift. The only way they can pull a Slovak away from his leader is to pull him up until he has gotten above his leader along the lines of thought they are working on. The very essence of the trade argument on the immigrant is — uncon-

sciously again — an uplifting and an Americanizing influence. The unionist begins to talk better wages, better working conditions, better opportunities, better homes, better clothes. Now, one cannot eternally argue "better" in the ears of any man, no matter how restricted the particular "better" harped on, without producing something of a psychological atmosphere of "better" in all his thought and live activities. If better food, better wages, or even better beer, is the only kind of "better" one might get a Slovak or a Lithuanian to think about, then the only way to improve him is to inject the thought of "better" into the only crevice to be found in his stupidity.

The immigrant comes to our country with a false conception as to our American institutions. To him the word government means oppression, because that is what it meant to him in the old country. He soon understands that here it means friend. Coming to America with a strong clannish instinct, it is very difficult for him to associate with his fellow workers; but in the la-

bor union, he gets away from his clannishness, — something which even his religion is not always able to accomplish for him. And the labor press reaches men of various nationalities. In some instances, a single paper will be printed in two or three languages. The constitution of the United Mine Workers of America is translated into nine different languages. It frequently requires four or five different interpreters at a single meeting to obligate the candidates for admission into the trades-union.

The labor press has an ethical value. There are something like two hundred and fifty weekly journals and about one hundred monthly periodicals. The monthlies as a rule are the organs of international organizations, while the weeklies represent the central labor unions, which are comprised of the locals in a particular city. While the editors of these journals are usually elected by the central labor unions, or by the

national organizations, they are given the largest liberty in the selection of the material which is printed.

Many of these papers have a fine literary value, and equal, in importance, some of the better magazines. They are certainly superior to most church papers, both as to the reading matter and in their general typographical appearance. It is not uncommon for a labor paper to regularly print the Sunday-School lesson for the following Sunday. Practically every labor paper contains at various times sermons preached by the local ministers. For four years, the labor press of America has regularly been printing an article sent out by one of the departments of Church and Labor in this country. The editors frankly call them sermons. And it has been noted that the articles which contain the greatest amount of religious matter are given the biggest headlines. The writer of these articles, who is a minister, invari-

ably attaches the title "Rev." to his name, largely because when the articles were first sent out without this designation, the editors themselves printed the title. These labor journals usually have high moral standards, and nearly every article printed has a tendency to raise the ideals of its readers.

Organized labor is a strong force for more temperate living among workingmen. A temperance association, composed exclusively of "walking delegates" and trades-union officials, is an actuality in England, a country which is more generally given over to strong drink than is our own. The official title of this remarkable society is "The Trades-Union and Labor Officials' Temperance Fellowship," and its object is "the personal practice and promotion of total abstinence, and the removal of trades' society meetings from licensed premises." The president of the Fellowship is Arthur Henderson, M. P., who is also chairman of

the Labor Party in Parliament. Among the members of the executive committee are the Rt. Hon. Thomas Burt, M. P., a member of the Privy Council; the Rt. Hon. John Burns, M. P., a member of the Cabinet; Will Steadman, M. P., secretary of the British Trades-Union Congress; J. Ramsay MacDonald, M. P., secretary of the Labor Party; D. J. Shackleton, M. P., chairman of the Trades-Union Congress; and Harry Gosling, who is a member of the London County Council. Prominent among the vice-presidents are J. Keir Hardie, M. P., Will Crooks, M. P., L. C. C., Philip Snowden, M. P., and twenty-six others, every one of whom is a member of Parliament, and every one a trades-unionist. This means that pretty nearly every trades-unionist elected to Parliament is a total abstainer.

The Fellowship had its beginnings in Leeds in 1904, during a session of the British Trades-Union Congress. A "tea-party"

was held by invitation of the National Temperance League, at which two hundred and sixty delegates were present. The suggestion that a total abstinence society be established in connection with labor was made at this time by Mr. Arthur Henderson, M. P., on behalf of his colleagues. During the following year many officials in the trades-union movement manifested their interest in the proposed society, with the result that at the Hanley meeting of the Trades Congress in 1905, at a gathering of three hundred delegates, the "Temperance Fellowship" was launched. Every year since its organization the Fellowship has given a tea at the time of the annual meeting of the British Trades Congress, and in every case fully half of the delegates attending have been present.

At the last meeting of the congress, there were present two hundred and seventy delegates, representative of a body of close

upon one million workingmen, which comprises about one half of the trades-unionists in England. The influence of this organization upon the rank and file of the workers has been quite remarkable. Temperance sentiment has been rapidly growing among the younger men in the labor movement, and as the secretary of the General Federation of Trades-Unions told me, "It is no longer considered honorable or decent for a labor man to put away three bottles of porter."

The Fellowship issues considerable literature, and sends out its manifestoes through the various local labor unions and the labor press. When the "National Freedom Defense League," representing the liquor interests, sent out a statement purporting to be in the interest of the workers, the entire committee and all of the vice-presidents got out a counter petition, which was given the widest publicity through the

daily press. Labor's statement was also given additional publicity through imprints issued by many local and national trades-unions. These publications effectually silenced the pretended friends of the workingman.

One of the most effective methods of work lies in securing meeting-places for local trades-unions which are free from the influence of the saloon. A successful effort has been made to secure the use of public buildings controlled by local governing bodies, and in many cases churches have been opened for the use of the trades-unions. A notable instance of coöperation in this respect is that of the Newcastle-on-Tyne Temperance Institute, where, as a result of the facilities offered, four thousand labor union meetings have been held in the building since it was opened to them, with an estimated attendance of over three hundred and fifty thousand persons, many of whom

were wives and children paying the dues of husbands and fathers.

The labor leaders of America have been approached by the writer, asking their opinions concerning the formation of a similar organization in the United States. About one hundred international officers have expressed themselves as being in favor of such an organization, and, no doubt, in a short time the organization, adapted to American conditions, will be launched. President Gompers, of the American Federation of Labor, has at three annual conventions expressed himself very strongly on the general question of freeing the labor unions from the influence of the saloon. In his last report, President Gompers said: —

> There is a constantly growing desire among our membership to hold their meetings in halls on the premises of which there is no sale of intoxicants. There is, however, in nearly all centres a dearth of sufficient halls suitable for meeting-rooms other than

those with saloon attachments. In the interest of sobriety and morality, I again urge that this convention strongly recommend to our affiliated organizations throughout the country that they inaugurate a movement which shall permit the use of our public schoolrooms for the evening meetings of our labor organizations.

In this effort to secure such meeting-places, the Christian people of America should give the organized workmen their heartiest support, for our efforts in the matter of temperance reform should not be merely negative, but positive. It is not sufficient simply to close up the saloon. It is necessary to find a substitute for the saloon. This, the trade-unionists are earnestly trying to do.

Organized labor is making a fight for the child. The National Child Labor Committee finds no heartier supporters anywhere than they do in the ranks of the trades-union movement. In the interest of the home life,

it is demanding equal pay to men and women for equal work, thus giving the women a square deal. There is no part of President Gompers' annual report which is given a more enthusiastic reception than that in which he deals with the question of universal peace. For, after all, it is the workingman who suffers most during a time of international strife.

While the socialist movement has not yet become as practical as the trades-union movement, it, nevertheless, has an important ethical value in the development of working people. Many of the ideals of socialism are based upon Christian principles, and they are born of a purpose to lift up our common humanity.

IV

WHY CHURCH AND LABOR MAY COÖPERATE

THERE may be many points of difference between the Church and Labor as to specific aims and methods, but there are enough points of agreement and a sufficient number of fundamental principles for which both stand, to warrant the Church and Labor in uniting for the purpose of carrying out a common programme.

The Church and Labor should be sympathetic one toward the other; first, because of their common mistakes. Both organizations have been controlled by men and women who were very human and therefore fallible. There are still occasions when a criticism one of the other is justifiable. But this criticism should be sympathetic, because it will no doubt be discovered

that the critic has been guilty of the same offense.

Church and Labor may coöperate, because they both believe very strongly in the salvation of society, although they may not agree in every particular as to how this salvation is to be accomplished. No one can successfully deny that the influence of the Church has extended infinitely beyond the comparatively narrow limits of its own institutions and organizations. A city without a church would present a hopeless situation. The unconscious influence of Christianity cannot be measured. The principles of the Church have so permeated society that the great mass of men have come to accept them as a matter of course. But even more significant is the positive influence of the Church upon society. However ineffective it may be in some respects, the Church may well be proud of its history in the matter of social reform. The labor

movement, if it counts for anything at all, must be considered as a social movement. In a very important sense, the individual is absolutely lost in it. There is no term that is more frequently employed to express the significance of this movement than "the solidarity of the working classes."

Church and Labor may coöperate because they both believe in the emancipation of the individual. They both demand that a man shall rise up and be counted as one. There was a time when nothing was quite so cheap as human life. Even to-day, many large employers of labor consider it cheaper to run the risk of killing their employees and paying the slight indemnity, than to go to the expense of introducing safety appliances. Labor has long been fighting for the recognition of the value of the individual human life. It has insisted that a man is of more value than a machine. The ancient philosophers declared that a purchased

slave is better than a hired one, and in accordance with this principle they compelled half the world to live behind prison bars. They insisted that the workingman has no soul. Then came Jesus Christ. He showed the world how highly God values the individual. And the Church has ever since advocated this principle.

Church and Labor may coöperate because they both believe in the care of the human body. It would not be very difficult to produce proof texts from Scripture in order to indicate that the Bible teaches this doctrine. "Ye are the temples of the Holy Ghost" was the statement of the New Testament writer when he argued for bodily cleanliness. Labor is trying to secure higher wages and shorter hours, in order that living conditions may be improved. In such matters as sanitary reform in tenement houses and factories, in the securing of suitable social and recreative centres for the people, and in

every other particular that influences the physical conditions of the masses, Church and Labor may present a united front.

Church and Labor may coöperate because they are both aiming at the development of the human soul. One takes it for granted that the Church is interested in soul development. Unfortunately, the Church has sometimes confined itself too strictly to this phase of its work. It must not be assumed, however, that the labor movement is simply a bread-and-butter question. It is more than that, and always has been. The subjects discussed in the chapter on the Ethical Value of the Labor Movement are indicative of the attitude of Labor toward the moral questions confronting society to-day. The trades-unions have not only raised the standard of living, they have not only bettered the morale of the workers, but have given them aspirations and ideals which are influencing the soul life of the people.

CHURCH AND LABOR MAY COÖPERATE

Because the Church and Labor have so many important things in common, it must be obvious that it would be to the advantage of both to get together so that each may become more effective.

Unfortunately, the Church is attempting to reach the workingman from above. It has failed to recognize the spirit of democracy, which has been so frequently referred to in previous chapters. It has been trying to "help" the workingman. There was a time when some men — the so-called privileged classes — believed that the rest of the world was created for their special benefit. All others were made simply to serve them, to make life soft and easy. They could not bear to think of hardship or of suffering. Such things were intended only for the "lower classes," — those who were so related to the beasts of the field, so close to the clods of the earth, that all the finer sensibilities were absent from their lives. But

they slowly discovered that the "clods" were capable of better things, so they began to "help" them on to the higher things of life. Amazing was the degree to which "the man with the hoe" could attain, when he was given half a chance. That he could hold his own with the best of those who formerly regarded themselves as of superior clay, of "bluer blood," of finer grain, was a discovery which came as a great surprise. Be it said to the credit of most of them, they welcomed the revelation that the common people were made of the same material that they were, — that their ideals of life, their heart hungers, their sorrows and their griefs, their loves and their joys, were very much like their own. All the more willing were they to give their lives in service in behalf of their more unfortunately situated neighbors.

But now we are ready for another step in advance. It was a fine thing to help the man

who was so ready to help himself, or even the man who was not ready. It was a Christ-like thing to bear the burdens of those who were heavy-laden. There will always be such in the world. Misfortune and accident, the lack of opportunity on account of physical disability or illness, and a good many other things, will always leave in our midst those who should be given a helping hand.

However, the normal man, be he rich or poor, educated through books or through experience; be he black or white, yellow or red, no matter what his circumstances, — so long as he is a man who is doing a man's work in the world, is "helping" every other fellow in a way which is rarely appreciated. The poorest, neediest man in the world, who is doing his best, is rendering a real service to the richest man in the world. He is making a contribution to the world's work which mere wages do not repay. Even the despised immigrant, who does not understand

a word of English, but who is contributing his share to the common good by shoveling dirt in a construction camp, is making a debtor of the man who will later ride over that railroad track in his comfortable Pullman, made smooth-running because that Italian made a good job of his shoveling. But everywhere in human life, in the lowliest places, in shop and factory, on the street and on the road, everywhere, men and women, and even little children, are bringing their contributions to the great treasure house to which we all come and freely draw — some more, some less; but he who draws most becoming the greatest debtor to all mankind.

Here is the point, then: Let us talk less about "helping," about "service," and let us think more about "exchange"; for that is what it is, — the exchange of our abilities, our contributions. He who teaches his brother a great truth, himself learns another.

This is the spirit which the Church needs to learn. We are talking too much about "sacrifice" and "devotion" in our church life and work, forgetting that there are others who are sacrificing as much as we are, and who are just as devoted. The problem of the Church and Labor is not a question of raising money. Money has practically nothing to do with it. Jesus never mentioned it when he commissioned the disciples. He spoke of spirit and life. The Church has always been greatest when it was poorest. It was when Francis of Assisi sacrificed his wealth, and took upon himself the form of a servant, that he became a leader of men.

It is not even a question of method. There is no system which may be introduced in the Church that will make the Church universally effective. Many a church conducted in the most old-fashioned manner, without any regard for modern methods, has been highly successful; but back of it

all, there was the spirit which attracted the men.

Workingmen are coming to believe that their salvation will depend upon themselves; and this is a most wholesome spirit to encourage. The depressed people need the assistance which the Church has always been rendering. There will always be a field for philanthropy. Men will still be called upon to render service to their fellow men, but never should there be a sense of superiority, even when ministering to the lowliest. In the discussion of the relation of Church and Labor, it should always be remembered that we are dealing with two great forces, each feeling that it has a distinct mission in the world, and each with a justifiable pride in its history. Neither can afford to look upon the other with a spirit of patronage.

The spirit of the labor movement is becoming so strongly religious, and there is so

much of the social spirit developing in the Church, that it seems altogether possible that some day Church and Labor will stand upon a common platform. But should either neglect the increasing opportunity which is thus coming to it, it will then become a question as to whether the Church will capture the labor movement, or whether the labor movement will capture the Church.

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